

THE ROCKVILLE ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION FY 2009 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FY 2010 GOALS

September 1, 2009

Introduction

The Mayor and Council established the Environment Commission in an October 28, 2002 resolution. Its predecessor, the Science, Technology and the Environment Commission was established in 1985. The Environment Commission is pleased to present its FY 2009 Accomplishments and its FY 2010 Goals to the Mayor and Council, City staff and the citizens of Rockville. We have organized our submission to reflect our own organizational structure:

Overall Environment Commission Activities

Sustainable Design and Energy Committee Actions

Watershed Protection Committee Actions

Environmental Outreach and Education Committee Actions

The Committees (formerly *working groups*) were established in FY 2006 to meet the growing workload of the Commission and to broaden the network of experts supporting the Commission's activities. Areas of focus were selected in accordance with the tasking by the Mayor and Council and city staff, community input from Commission-sponsored events, and Commission's own agenda for recommendation to the city. Each Committee is comprised of at least two Commissioners as well as community volunteers who either live or work in the City. Recruitment for these committees is done on an ongoing basis and no restrictions exist at this time on the number of volunteers per committee.

Accomplishments of FY 2009 (July 2008 - June 2009)

Overall Environment Commission Activities

- Continued to provide issue analysis and testimony to Mayor and Council on various environmental and sustainability issues and opportunities facing the City.
- Provided the Environmental Management Division of Public Works with technical support, policy analyses and resident perspectives on various environmental and sustainability matters
- Conducted *inreach* activities with other City organizations including:
 - A joint work session with the Mayor and Council
 - A joint meeting with the Historic District Commission and members of the Planning Commission.
 - Representatives met with the Recreation and Parks Board and its environmental designee.

- Endorsed the City's grant submission for funding of a pilot on the redesign of the Rockville Pike Corridor
- Developed recommendations for proposed amendments to the City anti-graffiti ordinance.
- Adopted a Rockville stream segment of Maryvale Creek to maintain trash free.
- Reviewed and commented on proposed redevelopment plans for the City's Vehicle Maintenance Facility on Rothgeb Drive.
- Commented on a proposed backyard habitat outreach program
- Commented on the master plan update process

Sustainable Design and Energy Committee Actions

- Reviewed and prepared detailed comments on the proposed amendments to the Rockville Zoning Code (Chapter 25) adopted in March 2009
- Reviewed and prepared extensive comments on the draft and proposed amendments to the Rockville *Green Building Codes* (Chapter 5) proposed in May 2009
- Reviewed and prepared comments on proposed new and renovated construction at the Gude Vehicle Maintenance Yard.

Watershed Protection Committee Actions

- Commented on the scope of a draft Request for Proposals (RFP) for a watershed assessment study of Cabin John Creek. These studies are conducted on each of Rockville's three watersheds every 10 years.
- Assisted the Environmental Management Division with the creation of a volunteer stream-monitoring program that tracks water quality, stream condition and habitat quality over time, including developing a program manual, training materials, promotional materials and giving presentations to Rockville residents.
- Constructed a prototype floating trash collector for use in City streams.

Environmental Outreach and Education Committee Actions

- Developed and improved exhibit and handout materials to increase awareness of environment and sustainability opportunities, issues and concerns.

- Organized the Commission's participation in Rockville Science Day and Hometown Holidays events, including sponsoring an information booth containing energy efficiency and rain barrel displays.
- Evaluated Environmental Excellence Award nominations for 2000 Tower Oaks Boulevard and New Mark Commons' tree protection program. Reviewed and commented on proposed designs for these awards.
- Reviewed and commented on a draft Energy Conservation Brochure prepared by Environmental Management Division.

Environment Commission Goals for FY 2010

- 1) Recruit additional Environment Commission Committee members for the Outreach Committee, the Watershed Protection Committee and the Sustainable Design and Energy Committee.
- 2) Pursue a closer working relationship with the Mayor and Council through the Council Liaison (if established); and briefings, joint meetings and other communication with Council members.
- 3) Advise City staff on proposed environmental and sustainability ordinances, policies and procedures, such as a revised *Sustainability Strategy*, proposed new or renovated City building projects, the draft stormwater and erosion control ordinance (Chapter 19), and the deer management policy and procedures.
- 3) Continue to advise the City on improvements and enhancements to the environmental and sustainability content on the City's website. Bring a particular focus on the mission and activities of the Commission itself on the web page.
- 4) Develop an external communications plan that will enhance communications with environmental stakeholders (i.e., residents, businesses, neighborhood associations and public interest organizations) on environmental and sustainability topics such as recycling, energy efficiency, alternative energy generation, home composting, and submission of environmental excellence award nominations
 - Develop standard briefings, presentations, display and demonstration materials and equipment for use in public outreach efforts
- 5) Encourage increased residential recycling through the following steps:
 - Increased outreach to neighborhood associations and other civic organizations
 - Placement of recycling containers in the public right of ways in Town Center and City Parks
- 6) Continue to participate in Science Day and Hometown Holidays as well as other important City or neighborhood-sponsored community events.

7) Promote and evaluate nominations for the City Environmental Excellence Awards.